

REMARKS:

This Amendment is in response to the Examiner's Office Action of February 12, 2002. This response was discussed with the Examiner during an interview on April 9, 2002.

Title

The Examiner objected to the title as including the word "Method", but this continuation application as filed did not include the word method, as reflected by the filing receipt of October 10, 2001, a copy of which is attached.

35 U.S.C. §112 Rejection

The Examiner rejected claims 1 - 5 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite. Claims 1 - 5 have been amended to clarify the terminology objected to in each instance set out in the Examiner's Action.

Claim 1

" mechanism" in line 8 of claim 1 has been replaced should have read "assembly" and the correction has been made.

In line 19, "a" has been inserted before "mechanism" as suggested by the Examiner. In line 19, "an" has been substituted for the term "the" preceding "axis" as recommended by the Examiner.

The term " axis" has been inserted between "X" and "direction" in line 21, between "Y" and "direction" and "X" and "direction" in line 22 to provide full antecedent support for the reference to said X axis, said Y axis and said θ axis in lines 27 and 28.

Claim 2

The term "said" preceding "positioning means" in line 2 of claim 2 has been deleted. "Motive means" has been replaced with "mechanism" in line 6.

Claims 3, 4 and 5

The dependency of claims 3, 4 and 5 has been corrected by amendments in which claim 3 has been made dependent from claim 2, claim 4 dependent from claim 3 and claim 5 dependent from claim 2. In lines 15 and 16 of claim 5, the term "motive means" has been replaced with "mechanism".

Claim 6

Newly added claim 6, dependent from claim 1 is definite in all respects and is patentable for the same reasons that the combination of claim 1 distinguishes over the prior art, and especially the Kaule '572 patent.

Summary

It is submitted that the amendments made to claims 1 - 5 by this response to the February 12, 2002 Office Action brings all of the claims into full compliance with the requirements of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. §112.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "Version with markings to show changes made."

Any additional fee which is due in connection with this amendment should be applied against our Deposit Account No. 19-0522.

In view of the foregoing, a Notice of Allowance appears to be in order and such is courteously solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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ATTORNEYS FOR APPLICANT(S)

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE.

1. (Amended) Apparatus for processing segments of a continuous flexible web comprising:

a processing station including web processing components for carrying out an operation upon a segment of the web after the segment is initially fed to the processing station; a web feeder assembly for successively feeding a stretch of the web while under tension to said processing station for initial placement of said at least one segment of the web at the station, said [mechanism] assembly being operable to intermittently release tension on the stretch of the web while said at least one segment thereof is at the processing station;

a holder at the processing station for holding each successive segment of the web after the segment is positioned in said initial placement thereof at the processing station and during at least a part of the time tension is released on the stretch of the web, said holder being [shiftable] movable while continuing to hold said at least one segment of the web at the processing station to [allow] cause the held segment to [shift] move relative to and while remaining a part of adjacent portions of the web [on each side thereof] during release of tension on said stretch of the web;

a mechanism operably coupled to said holder for selectively [shifting] moving the holder [in] along [the] an X axis direction of feed of the stretch of the web to the processing station, in a Y axis direction transverse of the X axis direction of feed of said stretch of the web, and about a θ axis of rotation of the holder perpendicular to [the] said X

and Y axis directions[,] while the said at least one segment of the web is held by the holder at said processing station.

said mechanism including adjustment control structure operably connected to the holder for shifting the holder in motion directions selected from the group consisting of motion along said X axis, motion along said Y axis, rotation about said θ axis, and simultaneous combinations thereof as required to obtain accurate alignment of the segment of the web with the processing components at said processing station while tension on the stretch of the web is released.

2. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, each of said segments carrying at least one position-identifying indicium, [said] positioning means including a reference assembly providing reference data corresponding to the accurate position of each web segment within the station, and means for comparing the location of said segment indicium with said reference data, said comparing means operably coupled with said [motive means] mechanism.

3. (Amended) The apparatus of claim [1] 2, said reference assembly comprising at least one reference indicium within said station.

4. (Amended) The apparatus of claim [1] 3, there being a pair of spaced reference indicia within said station.

5. (Amended) The apparatus of claim [1] 2, said comparing means including a computer controller operably coupled with said reference assembly and said [motive means] mechanism.

Add the following claims:

6. (New) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said holder includes a shiftable vacuum plate to hold the segment of the web at the web processing station, means for sequentially applying vacuum to the plate to successively hold segments of the web at the processing station, said mechanism being operable to move the vacuum plate to selectively adjust the position of the plate in said X axis direction, said Y axis direction and said θ axis direction.